

# DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

*Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.*

April 2013

## *Ephesians: God's Plan For His Church*

### **Lesson #2: Thanksgiving and Prayer**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

How has your attitude toward thankfulness changed over time? Why?

#### **OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION**

Read Ephesians 1:15-23

*Note: We could say that the prayer of Ephesians 1:17-19 is essentially a request that the promises of Ephesians 1:3-14 be found as real in the lives of the Ephesian Christians.*

1. What motivated Paul to pray for the Ephesians (vv 15-16)? What motivates you to pray for others?
2. What two things convinced Paul that their salvation was genuine? Vs 15; 1 Jn 2:9-11; 1 Jn 5:1
3. What did Paul ask God to give to the Ephesians in verse 17? Why was this important?
4. Why did Paul ask that the Ephesians' hearts would continue to be enlightened? (v. 18)
5. What kind of help is available to all Christians? Vv. 19-20 When?

*Note: working—Greek, “the energizing”; translate, “the effectual working” (Eph 3:7). The same superhuman power was needed and exerted to make us believe, as was needed and exerted to raise Christ from the dead.<sup>1</sup>*

6. What prevents some Christians from using this power? How can these obstacles be overcome?
7. How does God's power reach across time? v. 21
8. What did God place under Christ's control? v. 22
9. What is the church's relationship to Christ? Vv. 22-23
10. How did Paul support the Ephesian Christians? What lessons can we glean from Paul's example?
11. How does the knowledge of God's power, authority and control make you secure?

#### **APPLICATION**

How would people know that your faith was “genuine?”

Since God's power is available to you, what do you need to do to take hold of it this week?

*Alexander Pope wrote, “Know then thyself, presume not God to scan; the proper study of mankind is man.” Charles Spurgeon responded to this famous statement: “It has been said by someone that ‘the proper study of mankind is man.’ I will not oppose the idea, but I believe it is equally true that the proper study of God's elect is God; the proper study of a Christian is the Godhead. The highest science, the loftiest speculation, the mightiest philosophy which can ever engage the attention of a child of God, is the name, the nature, the person, the work, the doings, and the existence of the great God whom he calls his Father.”*

*David Guzik, Commentary on Ephesians, Blueletterbible.org*

*William Randolph Hearst once read of an extremely valuable piece of art, which he decided he must add to his extensive collection. He instructed his agent to scour the galleries of the world to find the masterpiece he was determined to have at any price. After many months of painstaking search, the agent reported that the piece already belonged to Mr. Hearst and had been stored in one of his warehouses for many years. It is tragic that many believers become entangled in a quest for something more in the Christian life, for something special, something extra that the “ordinary” Christian life does not possess. They already have all they need.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., & Brown, D. (1997). *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible* (Eph 1:19). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

<sup>2</sup> MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1986). *Ephesians*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary (41). Chicago: Moody Press.